GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3725
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2001
WTO
GOWDAR MALLIKARJUNAPPA

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Karnataka has pointed out the coconut growers inKarnataka were among the worst hit under the WTO regime as the prices of coconut had hit rock bottom;

(b) if so, whether the oil crushing units had refused to lift coconut owing to large scale imports;

(c) if so, whether the coconut growers were facing the pest attack, which had substantially reduced the yield in almost 75 per cent of the area under coconut;

(d) if so, whether any financial assistance has been given by the Centre to support the coconut growers in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD Y. NAIK)

(a) & (b): There has been fall in prices of coconut, copra and coconut oil during the year 2000 for various reasons, including import of cheaper edible oils. In Karnataka, mainly ball copra is produced which is used for edible purposes and not for crushing. In Karnataka, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED) started procurement of ball copra in December, 2000 when its prices fell below the Minimum Support Prices fixed by the Government. Till 15th March, 2001, NAFED has procured 4060 tonnes of ball copra in the State. As per available information, milling copra for crushing purposes is not received in APMC markets of Karnataka. NAFED has, however,procured 2.2 lakh tonnes of milling copra during 2000-2001 in the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Goa and Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(c): In the recent years, coconut plantations in the States of Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Naduand Andhra Pradesh were largely affected by eriophyid mite of coconut, while the problem of leaf eating caterpillar is there for the last several years.

(d) & (e): For biological control of leaf eating caterpillar, 4 biological control laboratory units were started in the State of Karnataka with 50 percent financial assistance from the Coconut Development Board for multiplication and liberation of parasites. During 9th Plan, an assistance of Rs.44.00 lakh was provided to Government of Karnataka for running these laboratory units. For control of eriophyid mite of coconut in Karnataka, an assistance of Rs.8.90 crore has been sanctioned by the Board during the period 1998-99 to 2000-2001.